

Hon. Mr. Phillips: I am sorry to interrupt Senator Argue but he will appreciate that my province is a long way from his, and I am not familiar with these details. However, does not the farmer pay a form of insurance premium, and does this not bring it into provincial jurisdiction?

Hon. Mr. Argue: The farmer pays 75 per cent of the premium cost and the federal government pays 25 per cent, and the provincial and federal governments share the administrative costs.

The new administration in Saskatchewan has a committee which goes around the province studying crop insurance. There has been an indication that it might be desired to bring in compulsory crop insurance in Saskatchewan. This may or may not be a good thing; I would have my doubts. I would hesitate to support such a compulsory program without first being convinced that it is really necessary. If compulsory crop insurance is introduced and works out well, of course, it will assist the political fortunes of the provincial government. The reason it would be successful is that the taxpayers of Canada from one coast to the other, through the federal Treasury, would pay a large part of the cost of providing such crop insurance, and make it possible for the provincial government to undertake the scheme. I would think there are even greater dangers in such a program being adopted than the one I have already mentioned.

• (1520)

I am pleased that Bill C-5 contains an amendment, to be found at page 2, reading as follows:

Section 16 of the said Act is amended by adding thereto, immediately after paragraph (b) thereof, the following paragraph:

“(b.1) every loan made under this Act shall be made,
(i) in the case of an individual, only to a Canadian citizen or to a landed immigrant within the meaning of the Immigration Act . . .”

This means that the funds are available to a Canadian citizen or a landed immigrant.

In the Province of Saskatchewan, however, at the 1972 session of the legislature Bill No. 115, entitled an Act respecting the Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Lands in Saskatchewan, was introduced. It defines a non-resident in clause 2, as follows:

(d) “non-resident person” means:
(i) an individual who is not domiciled in Saskatchewan.

The bill provides that in order to farm in the Province of Saskatchewan one must be a resident of the province. A non-resident who wishes to farm in Saskatchewan has one year in which to dispose of his land. If I leave my farm to my son—

Hon. Mr. McDonald: May I ask a question? Is it not true that not only must you be a resident of the province to farm in Saskatchewan, but you must also be a resident in order to own land?

Hon. Mr. Argue: That is the whole point. This really has nothing to do with the farming as such but with the ownership. A non-resident of Saskatchewan cannot own farm land there.

[Hon. Mr. Argue.]

If I leave my farm to my son Greg, and he continues to work in Ottawa and to live, as he does, in the Province of Quebec, he has one year in which to return to Saskatchewan or he must dispose of the farm. In my opinion that is vicious, hideous legislation. It is un-Canadian and just as separatist as any legislation can be. I think this is a vile and vicious piece of legislation. Are we to turn over the administration of the federal small farms development program to a province that brings in such restrictive land ownership legislation?

Not only was this bill presented in the legislature, but a land bank act was introduced. This is an act under which the provincial government will purchase land and lease it to farmers on a long-term basis for sufficient cash rental to cover the interest rate applied to the purchase price of the land plus taxes. It was thought in Saskatchewan that the federal government might come forward soon with its small farms development program, perhaps even administered by the Farm Credit Corporation as a national act. In view of this it was decided that they would rush in quickly with their land bank act, which provides for the provincial government to handle the development of land, purchasing and leasing it. Then, to make the net even wider, they announced that in order to own and farm land in Saskatchewan it will be necessary to be a resident of the province.

In terms of doing a job in the development of farms in Saskatchewan—even if one agreed, which I do not, with their land bank development program—there is such a small sum of money involved, namely \$10 million, that it is almost frivolous. If a farm costs \$40,000, that \$10 million would purchase only 250 farms. Such a number out of a total of 75,000 farms would take 300 years or thereabouts before the cycle would be completed once. Well, no one wants them to complete the cycle once. In my opinion, however, 250 farms purchased in one year for the land bank development program in relation to 75,000 existing units means that it is a quite frivolous program.

Therefore, in the interests of Canadians, in the interests of a national plan, and in the interests of ensuring that there is a federal presence when the federal government provides the funds, I am pleased that this amendment is provided in Bill C-5. I hope the present Minister of Agriculture will stick to his guns and administer his own small farm adjustment program.

If the federal government, with its small farm development program, goes into Saskatchewan and does the kind of job I think it should and will do, the land bank development program will fade away. It will be seen to be what it really is, a very tiny effort based on a false premise, and, coupled with their Bill 115, that it constitutes a vicious attack against the rights and privileges of Canadians—

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Argue: —who happen to have been Saskatchewan residents at one time and who now at any rate own land in that province.

I agree that certain amendments could be introduced which would improve this type of legislation. I am confident that in the future amendments will be made to improve it but, as Senator Michaud has so ably demonstrated in his presentation to this house, this is good